(C) General

(i) Safety audits are being done regularly.

(ii) Thrust has been given on quality of inspections. Inspection by ISO have also been increased.

(iii) Workers involvement have been increased in safety through their participation in different fora and through training, publicity and propaganda and organising special safety drives.

(iv) CIL has established structured multi disciplinary Internal Safety Organisation (ISO) for monitoring safety status—both at subsidiary level and CIL Head Quarters. Safety status is also being monitored through monthly meetings of Safety Committee at mine level, Annual Tripartite Committee, meeings at area level, bi-annual meeting of CIL safety board and also bi-annual meetings of the standing eommittee on safety in coal mines. Recommendations of the above monitoring agencies are implemented to enhance the safety measures.

(v) Programme has been taken up to provide Filter Self Rescuers (FSRs) to all workmen apart from personal protective equipment like shoes, helmets etc.

(vi) Rescue services have been improved.

Setting up of Caustic Soda factory in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh

† 304. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the fact that a caustic soda factory based on solution of salt can be easily set up in Drang area of Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh due to abundance of salt rocks in this area; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard?

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† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals have reported that caustic soda industry has been de-licensed. The entrepreneurs are free to set up caustic soda plants by following the route of filing Industrial Entrepreneurs Memorandum. The caustic soda is manufactured by electrolysis of common salt, which is one of the inputs in the manufacture of caustic soda.

Merger of subsidiaries of Coal India Limited

305. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any definite plan of merging the seven subsidiaries of Coal India Limited into one Company and if so, by when;

(b) which are the loss making subsidiaries of CIL in the financial year 2000-2001;

(c) since how long these companies are incurring losses;

(d) whether these loss making companies are referred to BIFR; and

(e) whether the loss making companies are subsidised by CIL by any mechanism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) A proposal to restructure the Coal India Limited (CIL) and its subsidiary companies from the existing holding company-subsidiary set-up to unitary set-up has been received in the Department of Coal. The matter is under examination, and, at this stage, it may not be possible to indicate the likely time by when a decision in the matter will evolve.

(b) and (c) Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL), Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) and Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), the three subsidiaries of Coal India Limited (CIL) are continuously running under losses for years together. However, Coal Mine Planning & Design Institute Limited (CMPDIL). a non-coal